Central schemes in Uttaranchal

3738. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the salient features of the Centrally sponsored schemes of development of medicinal and aromatic plants, development of roots and tuber crops, development of mushrooms, bee keeping, schemes for foundation and certified seeds production of vegetable crops in the State of Uttaranchal;

(b) the criteria for allotment of funds to the State; and

(c) the amount sanctioned and utilized for the purpose so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "Macro-Management in Agriculture-Supplementation/Complementation of State Efforts through Work Plan" in all the States including Uttaranchal under which the State Government can take up developmental programmes as per their felt needs and requirement. Under this scheme, assistance is being provided for the development of horticulture through activities like supply of good quality seeds and planting material including production of foundation and certified seeds for vegetables, root and tuber crops, coverage of area with improved varieties, conservation of endangered species of medicinal plants through herbal gardens, establishment of spawn production and composting units for mushroom production besides conducting training programmes for farmers. The Government of Uttaranchal have earmarked an amount of Rs. 250.00 lakhs during 2003-04 for taking up these activities.

(b) The funds are allocated to the State Government on the basis of their past performance and taking into account the unspent balance available with the State out of the funds released during the previous years.

(c) Under the Macro-Management Scheme, an amount of Rs. 225.97 lakhs was sanctioned for horticulture sector and the entire amount has been utilized by the Government of Uttaranchal during the year 2002-03.

Waiver of interest on crop loans

3739. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prime Minister is the only authority to take final decision on waiver of interest on crop loans for the farmers in the drought prone States;

(b) if so, whether this issue was brought to the notice of the Prime Minister by the Agriculture Ministry and was apprised all facts about the farmers;

(c) whether the Prime Minister has finally taken the decision;

(d) if not, by what time final decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(e) to what extent it will benefit the farmers in the drought affected States ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (c) The competent authority in the Government has decided to extend the following relief measures to the farmers affected by drought :—

(i) There will be no recovery of any amount either by way of principal or interest during the current financial year in respect of Kharif crop loan.

(ii) The principal amount of crop loan will be converted into term loan and will be recovered over a period of minimum five years in case of small and marginal farmers and four years in the case of other farmers.

(iii) The first year's deferred liability of interest on Kharif 2002 crop loans will be waived completely.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Based on the announcement made by the Government of India, the banks have been advised by the Reserve Bank of India and NABARD to defer the interest due on the Kharif 2002 crop loans in such a way that the first instalment of interest repayment would be 20% of the deferred interest. This instalment of deferred interest which is to be waived by banks, will be reimbursed by Government of India in the case of all farmers. The banks have also been advised not to charge any interest on the deferred interest.

Shortfall in cotton production

3740. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI :
SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the cotton production in the country is expected to be the lowest in the past 8 years; if so, the details thereof;